background information

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We regret the delay in publishing this number of Background Information. The next issue will appear December, 1956.

The Editors

THE PROBLEM OF EQUITY IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

by Prof. E. de Vries

In defining Christian goals for the economic development of a society, we often declare we want balanced development and change, and we judge relations between farmers and consumers, between employers and employees from the perspective of such a balance. Yet we know that in technological and economic change there is very little that makes for balance. We might even say that it is one of the great achievements of economics and social science in the last century that we are doing away with - we had to do away with - the fallacy of the belief in the inherent peace, equilibrium and harmony between different parts of economic life, arising from the free play of inventions and new enterprises springing up; the belief that an equilibrium would be reached, if not immediately, then in the long run, through sheer economic force. But technological change has been much more rapid than the economic seers of the liberal school - Marx included - could foresee, and we don't believe in this idea of natural equilibrium any more. It would, of course, be very easy if the Churches and Christians could just rely on economic and social forces and say, "Well, sometimes the shoe may pinch on one foot or the other, but if we just wait a while there will always be satisfactory economic relations between labour and capital, between farmers and city people, between producers and consumers." That would be pleasant but it isn't true. Much more is needed than just waiting for the natural course of events.

If we look at the reality of economic development, we find that there are black spots even in the rosy picture of countries that have had, over the last decades, a very rapid development. Some groups and some areas were left behind in the upsurge. We may cite Canada as an example. No-one can deny that the economic growth and development of Canada has been the most rapid in the world in the 20th century. But there were parts of Nova Scotia which were basically stagnant, and economic and social conditions were becoming worse. People had to leave the villages and the countryside because they could not earn the sheer necessities of living. A very special effort - in this case by the Roman Catholic Church - was necessary to bring this area back to life. That it could be done in Nova Scotia is in itself heartening, because it shows that there is not necessarily a tragedy here, that in an area of rapid development where there may be a tendency for certain regions to fall behind, there is also the possibility of revival and rejuvenation. I don't believe that there are many areas in Europe where the situation is as bleak and difficult as it was in Nova Scotia twenty years ago.

Factors influencing the development of particular areas

The reason why development favours some spots, countries or industries is largely a question of technological change. But this also works together with a factor in human behaviour which is very hard to change: that of consumer preference. We all know that the demand for bread and other everyday foodstuffs is what economists call very inelastic. Rich people don't eat many more potatoes than poor people - they can only eat a certain amount. Therefore, in an area that could only grow potatoes, economic development would be most difficult. Speaking more generally, because people have a limited stomach and a limited desire for quite a number of foodstuffs, agriculture is basically in a dangerous spot and may be left behind in the stride forward towards development. And if agriculture is left behind, there is a great danger that rural and village people will be left behind, and that conditions of life and

the future of young people in these areas will be very difficult. This situation has in itself nothing to do with socialism or capitalism; it has to do with the human stomach, and it is difficult to change. Political, ideological or economic systems are often less powerful than some basic economic and social effects of our changing society.

I may cite a few examples of sudden technological change and indicate the effect it had on producers, raising them from a very low level to a high plateau of economic prosperity. In Borneo and the plains of Sumatra the land was so unfertile nothing could grow, not even rice, and there were no people there, until the time of the automobile. The invention of the automobile lead to the starting of rubber-growing in Sumatra and Borneo, and by some freak of nature rubber trees grew where nothing else would, and since then the parts of Indonesia that were most backward fifty years ago have become the most prosperous area of the country. They went through a period of extensive boom, similar to that in a gold-rush area.

Or to cite another instance: the sands of Arabia were among the most backward areas of the world for many thousands of years; then all at once there is a modern industrial development. Oil is discovered under the sand and the people don't know what to do with the wealth from the oil. Here the problem is not one of slow development, but of not knowing what to do with the sudden wealth that comes from technological development.

There are many other instances more or less on the same lines; the dynamics of world society are at work in Saudi Arabia, Equador and Borneo. They have been working in Chicago and Pittsburgh, London and Amsterdam, but the effects are much more evident in certain areas far away than in the immediate lands of industrial revolution and development. So we see that, especially in the last century, certain areas suddenly received a tremendous economic lift from a technological development somewhere else. It is, perhaps, one of the aspirations, one of the hidden hopes, of certain areas that there will be a technological development in the world that will give them their turn.

In this connection, I would agree with the people who believe that atomic energy for peaceful purposes in general will be developed slowly because of the heavy capital investment involved, but atomic energy at a certain point may lead to a very rapid and sudden development in an area; for instance, where mineral deposits are extracted from the soil, with the help of atomic energy, it might pay to extract metals out of the ore.

To suggest another example, the Canadians, the Swedes and the Russians have been working very hard to develop a wheat that would grow in Arctic conditions; if that technological improvement in agriculture could be made vast areas in Canada and the north of Siberia would all of a sudden become very important agricultural areas. This kind of modern science and technique may awaken an area that has thus far been left by the wayside.

There is also the reverse process, because such a boom in an area may be very short-lived. Chile had for a long time a monopoly in nitrogenous fertilisers, and there was a time when people believed that the world would be ruled from Chile, because without fertilisers there would be no food. During the first world war Germany could not get nitrates for its factories, so at great expense it developed these fertilisers from the air, and today everyone is doing it and the Chileans have a very hard time to remain in the world market and convince buyers that natural nitrates are better than those

made in a factory. In World War II the Americans had no rubber from Malaya and Indonesia, and at great expense they produced synthetic rubber. There has been - and still is - a fear in Asia that Americans will put so much capital into the production of synthetic rubber that natural rubber will come to nothing. In 1910 there was nothing in Malaya, Sumatra and Borneo; by 1925 there was a famous rubber boom which by 1930 had started to peter out, and the fear is that perhaps, by 1975 there will be no rubber produced there anymore. But there are still people in these areas; they are not moving away as a result of the new situation of trade in nitrates or rubber. And here we come to a very difficult problem of justice and equity. Is this technological rise and fall a necessity? If so, how do we accept it? Are we at the mercy of these chemists and engineers, these technicians? We can't stop them from going on with their work, and I believe that from the standpoint of our Christian faith there is nothing that should make them stop. But can we just be onlookers and let these things happen, and say it is just too bad that people don't eat more potatoes and wheat, and so the farmers become poor and have to move off their farms? Or, that there is no more need for natural rubber, so let the Dyaks of Borneo go back to the swamps? They cannot pay for schools, etc., so they must go back to their natural barbarism. We cannot be onlookers in this process.

Moral problems due to different rates of economic development

I have picked some rather extreme examples, but there are many places in the world where this is a very urgent problem for the nation's government and churches. What do we do about it?

There are some peoples who say, "We are not onlookers in the historical process; we are fighters and we are so dynamic we are in the first ranks; we deserve to be in the first ranks and we'll fight with whatever we have in our hands or in our minds to put more capital into our society. We are here to stay: if others lag behind, that is their fault - if they had used their opportunities they might be where we are, and if they are not, that's just too bad." This may lead to a defence of the status quo. Others may say, "We are not in the first ranks, but we are - although technically or economically weak - justified in being there; we will organise ourselves, we have enough political influence in the world to make a strong impact." And still other peoples may say, maybe economically, "We don't deserve what we have, but still we want to keep it, exactly in the same way as a group of industrialists may try to keep control of their industry, although the industry under their control is rather ineffective. If you have the opportunity, you might hold on, at least as long as you are chairman of the board of directors; let your children worry about the future." In the last century this attitude was applied to the world. A warship could sail out to some distant places in Asia or Africa where the situation was not favourable to a colonial power, and just the sight of the warship would be enough. We might even say that what is happening is in the Bible: to those who have, more will be given, and to those who have not, from them will be taken even what they have.

But of course this can be reversed as well, and it is also said that everyone who is in the first ranks by the chance of technology, by their own ingenuity or by their own capital, far more than by hard work, are robbers, are by nature exploiters, and that all right and justice are on the side of the people who are down and out, because there is no moral reason for some being prosperous, dynamic and rich.

None of these attitudes are open to the Church. Nor are they open to economic, political or social science. The attitude of the Church, should be based on a judgment of the individual case rather than on such generalisation as are mentioned above. Neither the preservation of the status quo, nor the claim of certain parts of the world or of certain groups in society, that the have an inherent right to be prosperous, nor the claim by people who don't have power to an inherent right to change the rules and become masters of the world are in themselves valid.

A number of factors enter in the analysis of the particular situations where we must strive for equitable relations. (I prefer to use equity rather than justice here.) The first and almost natural economic consideration, which cannot and should not be reasoned away, is that the newcomer in the use of technological processes or the first user of new opportunities in economic life has an advantage over the rest of society. And at the same time the one who has been a pioneer, but is so no longer because someone else has become the pioneer, has to fall back and to re-adjust.

I can illustrate this with a few experiences that have made deep wounds in European life, and continue to do so. When railways were extended into the prairies of North America, it suddenly became possible for wheat to be grown there by European immigrants. In the wide fertile plains of North America, with their knowledge of agriculture acquired in Europe, they were able to produce wheat at a low price, and railways and steamships brought it into European ports. The immediate result of the development of the North American mid-west was a threat to the heart of Europe, because at that time in France, Germany and many other European countries, agriculture was still so important and so much the basis of the national vitality, that this deadly threat to agriculture brought them to the brink of disaster. What should they do? Three policies were followed in Europe. The first developed in England: when England saw this cheap grain coming to its shores it decided to concentrate on its own pioneer advantage in the field of heavy industry and shipping, gave up competing with grain from the other side of the Atlanti and so agriculture was allowed to decline. A great part of the land where grain had been grown was used for hunting and sheep; people moved into the cities, and the British nation came to depend on trade, and nautical and industrial expansion.

France and Germany tried with all their might to protect their farmers and erected high tariff walls against American grain. They had a genuine belief that unless they did so, the whole nation would more or less disappear If you couldn't grow wheat in northern France or in eastern Germany, what else could you do? For them there was no possibility of following the Britis example. But the result, especially in France, has in the long run been disastrous because of the resulting stagnation of agricultural development in certain parts of the country which had been in the forefront of development in the previous century. In many valleys for a while there were only old people, then none. Even now, after half a century, there is slight possibility of revitalising parts of the French countryside.

A third approach is illustrated in Denmark and the Netherlands where production was cut only very slightly and only on a very temporary basis and where they adapted their agriculture. They went into dairy and horticultural farming; they intensified rather than extensified agriculture; they put enormous efforts into expansion and research, and they survived.

I am not saying that this third approach was the best - either morally best or more responsible towards their own nation than the others, because we must admit that if the Ruhr had not developed into an enormous industrial area, and if France and England had not developed industrially, there would have been no market for the Danish and Dutch dairy and horticultural products. So it is impossible to set up an easy moral standard by which we can say that what the British did was morally wrong to their farmers, or what the French did was wrong in another respect, and that the Dutch method was the best. It is much more complicated than that. No strict moral judgment can be made on these policies.

The relation of technical change and social structure

There are more subtle changes as well. As an agriculturalist, may I again take an example from agriculture. There was a time not so very long ago when certain agricultural areas were by nature rich and others poor: it was a question of soil, which was a question of Providence; a farmer on clay, sand or peat owed his wealth or his poverty directly to God. Today we have artificial fertilisers, and while the relations are now completely reversed, the differences due to soil have largely disappeared. With other crops, other methods, capital investment, fertilisers, etc., it is possible to have a very high production from land that was considered almost worthless a hundred years ago. The social structure in a village changes immediately, because the use of new methods makes it possible for a man with a small piece of land to farm better than a man with a large farm who does not change his methods. The International Bank sent me to Chile to look at the agricultural development there. In Chile there are very small farms in certain areas and large farms in other parts of the country. The effect of modern techniques and of fertilisers is that large farms become impossible to operate because no one has the capital to improve up to 50,000 hectares on one farm. The farms of 10 or 20 hectares have a natural advantage, and so the family farm comes out in front. That is fine; that is what we want. We believe that in a nation a good proportion of family farms is a healthy development, but it is in this instance a result of modern technology. With obsolete technology a large farm on which tractors are used - or rather, the extension of mechanised farming - has a great advantage over an even more obsolete small farm that has only a horse or cow. But with complete mechanisation family farming may come out on top.

In the West we say that, ideologically, family farming is what we want. I would, however, be rather reluctant to say that the system in the Sudan or that of the small peasant farmer in Japan or of the family farm in Holland is ideologically the best one. There is too close a connection with the level of technique in farming to make a judgment possible. We can only say that any system that defends itself because it exists, is wrong - technically wrong, almost certainly morally wrong - because it is providing opportunities for an irresponsible use of the land by the farmer. Nobody can say that a sheep farmer in Western Australia is wrong because he has a farm of 50 thousand square miles with half a million sheep - that is the only kind of farm possible in Western Australia. That would be a crime in Iceland, not only technically, but also against the social structure and the community life of Iceland.

Economic costs of change

Social changes of this kind are sometimes difficult to accept. Generations may go down in the struggle for new farms and the introduction of new techniques. There is an enormous amount of tragedy of this character in our world, which is changing so rapidly, and we so easily accept the fruits of

this development without looking at the suffering and the needs which they cause in certain parts of our own societies. Here, let us take an example from Britain. Great Britain was one of the pioneers in the field of railways, and its railways were once the best in the world. Now if you sail by Southampton, and you see those tiny freight cars, you may ask how is it possible for the British nation to be efficient and transport all its goods in those undersized cars: why don't they rejuvenate their railways and have 15-ton cars as in Holland, or 30-ton cars as in the United States? But somebody has calculated what it would cost to do this: the tunnels are only just wide enough to let the present cars pass, and in order to make those railways wide enough it would mean rebuilding many cities in Britain. The whole change would require an enormous capital investment about equal to their entire housing and building programme over the next ten years. What must the British nation do - change its complete railway system by spending capital which would have been used in the next ten years for building houses, or carry on with this obsolete railway? There is a slow gradual improvement in railways and in building, but both cannot be done at the same time.

Similarly, housing conditions in many western cities are completely obsolete, with houses that were built in 1870-90 in which today large families of labourers are living in cramped conditions (though some extensive new housing for labourers, started after the last war, has made an enormous difference in standards of living). Is it possible in London, in Paris, or in Amsterdam to do away with all those old houses and start again? Well, technically it is possible, but this could be achieved only at the expense of improvements in factories, and then in twenty years we would likely find that we had modern housing but very obsolete factories, railways and roads. Such questions are largely a matter of judgment as to what should have priority. Can a nation still make do with obsolete equipment in one field in order to expand more rapidly in another? Our dynamic societies are faced with these problems of moral judgment, of social justice, and Christians have a voice in what is being done by various governments and parliaments. Here are the heart-searching questions. What, in our judgment, should have preference, since we must hold back in certain fields. Certain groups will always have to suffer if others are to go ahead: to suffer or at least to sacrifice, since there is not enough wealth so we can distribute it fairly and all be happy. I think there is no country in the world rich enough to fulfil all its urgent justified needs within the next ten years: this is true of India, Japan, Holland, Germany, England and the United States.

The need to develop depressed areas

But there are certain fields where we cannot abstain from acting where something has to be done. First of all, there are the "depressed areas" in our various countries. A tremendous effort has to be made to bring certain depressed areas back to life. This implies a capital investment and it is an accepted principle in most Western countries that they are justified in spending large amounts for this purpose out of the common resources of the nation. There are these backward or depressed areas in every country. (However, we may not be justified in saying that all the dead towns and deserted mountain valleys have to be revitalized. If we wanted to preserve all the great nations of the past we should do injustice to the new generation.)

We must remember that mobility is one of the causes of great changes in nations of our time. Children cannot, and perhaps should not, follow the methods of their fathers. There are in Holland at least 50 thousand small farms where it can be expected that the son will follow the father as a farmer.

But perhaps when he dies the farm should be added to another farm to make a viable unit out of two small farms. There are a great number of people that could be trained to work in large enterprises rather than in one-man enterprises. The training of young people for new jobs puts a very heavy strain on them; it gives them an economic advantage, but puts them under heavy moral and social pressure. In the educational systems in all our nations and churches, we need equipment for this task, and if we are lagging behind we are doing a great injustice to our countries. In our present generation one of our most urgent responsibilities is to train our young people for greater maturity and easier mobility.

And then of course there are new technological possibilities, and if they can bring a dead area to life again, this should be done. The south of Holland was a dead area for a century or more, but with modern technology it has now become one of the rich areas in our country.

For this purpose capital must be transferred through private enterprise or government investment. An area can be brought to new life by the building of power stations and other basic equipment, as in the Tennessee Valley, or in the southern States of America, or the northern part of the Netherlands or Northern Ireland, or parts of Scotland. Most often this will be done in the normal course of economic events, without too much of an element of social justice in it. But the situation is different where a nation decides to redistribute its social capital, or what we have begun to call the infra-structure of the nation. It means that schools are not dependent only on local fees, but prosperous areas are taxed for the improvement of the poor areas; this may be done also through building of roads, railway electrification, housing schemes, etc. It may very well be an important aspect of social justice within a nation is to ensure that by redistribution of national income and national wealth, people in such depressed areas, and especially young people are not deprived of equal opportunities because they happen to live in an area that is on the downgrade or that has not yet had much opportunity to develop. I would say that to do everything that makes for economic viability and for a new life for people now living in a depressed or static area of a country, is part of our task of social justice.

II

FREEDOM AND EQUALITY IN BRITISH SOCIALIST THOUGHT TODAY

by Denys Munby

Socialists in Britain have always been ambiguous in their attitude toward freedom. This ambiguity is most clearly seen in the attitude of Beatrice Webb In June 1926, she was writing in her diaries: "We regard Soviet Russia and Fascist Italy as belonging to one and the same species of Government; the creed-autocracy insisting on the supremacy of one social philosophy."[1] In October 1927, she was denouncing Bernard Shaw's enthusiasm for Mussolini: "What is new and deplorable is the absence of any kind of sympathetic appreciation of the agony that the best and wisest Italians are today going through any appreciation of the mental degradation as implied in the suppression of al liberty of act, of thought and of speech."[2] But in 1932, the Webbs set off to Soviet Russia, and the result was their enormous work on the "new civilisation of Russia, in which, while not denying the massive infringements of the traditional liberties, they justified them by the urgencies of the situation and by various semi-truths such as that "In all countries the individual citizen's mind is bludgeoned to compel him to admit a whole series of ideas. Where systems differ is in who wields the bludgeon and with what purpose."[3]

There have been many trends in the desire for freedom among Socialists. Trade unionists have fought for the freedom of trade unions, but have not been notable protagonists of the rights of individuals against the trade union closed shop. Left-wing internationalists have fought brave battles in protest against the infringements of civil liberties in the colonies, and have protested against the misuse of anti-sedition laws at home against pacifists and anti militarists; but they have not always been equally concerned with the civil rights of persons like Sir Oswald Mosley and other Fascists. Right-wing Labou Home Secretaries have been punctilious about the rights of these persons befor the courts, and about the freedom of the press, but have sometimes been ready to support dubious actions in the colonies, and have often been cavalier in deporting, or refusing admittance to, left-wing "undesirable aliens". The left-wing within the Labour Party has, because of its minority position, always protested against the steam-roller methods of the party bureaucracy and the undemocratic methods of trade union pressure on the party; but these have been the supporters of extremes of planning, ready drastically to interfere with individuals' lives, if thought necessary to make planning more efficient, and rarely as aware of the dangers of bureaucracy in a planning society as in their own party. On the contrary, the majority section within the party and the Trade Union bosses have often proved the defenders of civil liberties against the doctrinaire planners, while ruthlessly using their steam-roller tactics to ensure these ends. The dialectic between freedom from constraint and freedom for a good life has been as active within the Labour movement as between Conservatives and Socialists. Fully to appreciate the significance of a Socialist's thought on freedom one needs to be aware of his role within the party and society; thought about freedom is much more "existential" than speculative. This, of course, applies equally to Conservatives, who, when in office, talk differently from when they are in opposition.

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1 - Beatrice Webb's Diaries, 1924-1932, ed. by Margaret Cole, p. 106.

2 - Ibid., p. 155.

3 - Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation, p. 1032.

Nevertheless, in general one can say that the Labour movement has stressed the need for more opportunities for all, even at the expense of some diminution of the traditional liberties of the few, and has not been in the forefront in defending the rights of the citizen against bureaucracy or before the law (though it must be remembered that one of the achievements of the Labour Government was to make the processes of law available to humble citizens by means of the Legal Aid Act). It is therefore something of a phenomenon when the Labour Party produces, in a series of policy statements to be discussed at the Party Conference in October 1956, not only one called Towards Equality, but also one on Personal Freedom, which starts by openly presenting the frustration of the citizen faced by local town planning restrictions and compulsory purchase orders and still more startlingly, the case of the individual wrongly expelled from a trade union. (The town planning legislation of the Labour Government is one of its most constructive achievements, however much it may be criticised in detail). A little earlier, in February 1956, that stormy petrel of the Labour intelligentsia, Mr. R.H.S. Crossman, produced a Fabian pamphlet on Socialism and the New Despotism, continuing some of the themes first adumbrated in New Fabian Essays (1952), where Socialists were enjoined to fight against the managerial society. More recently, the group which calls itself Socialist Union has produced a full statement of its position (continuing its earlier pamphlets on Socialism - A New Statement of Principles and Socialism and Foreign Policy), in a Penguin called Twentieth Century Socialism.

Mr. Crossman has one of the most brilliant minds in the Labour movement, but he has never attained to commensurate responsibilities, perhaps partly because he is a rootless intellectual, partly because he has the capacity to see many sides of a question, which fits ill with the kind of consistency of policy that politicians require. (He has also advocated foreign policies that have not commended themselves to majority opinion in Britain.) He is therefore in a strong position to hit out against all forms of despotism, whether in the Labour Party or in the civil service, in industry or in the trade unions. His pamphlet is a great blast in the old radical tradition. He wants to "socialise the trade unions", to "give Ministers eyes and ears" so that they can "regain control of the huge State bureaucracy", to put "a curb on Cabinet dictatorship", and reduce the power of "the party oligarchs", as much as of oligopolists in industry. He believes that "the Labour Party should give a very high priority" to the problem of "abuse of power by civil servants". He attacks the excessive use of "the Whip" in disciplining party members both in Parliament and in local Councils. Certainly these blasts of fresh air are needed in the stuffy atmosphere of Labour politics today, where only too often petty tyranny and gross abuse of power hide under the names of "Trade Union solidarity" and "party discipline".

The Labour Party cannot officially be as outspoken as Mr. Crossman, who was a member of the committee which produced the pamphlet on freedom. This naturally repeats the traditional view that freedom is opportunity, and that "freedom and equality are inseparable". More important is the clear assertion that "we are well aware that the authority of the State can damage personal freedom" and the stress laid on the need for "effective civil liberties and an independent judiciary", which "must safeguard personal freedom against abuse of power, either by the State or by any organisation". Also interesting is the affirmation "that the individual, though a member of the community, also has an inviolable personal identity with rights of his own. We therefore agree that the ownership of personal property is a human right, but this right is not absolute." The pamphlet proceeds to consider in detail problems of the citizen and the state, bureaucracy, civil liberties, delegated legislation and

administrative tribunals, and "private courts". Not surprisingly, it is extremely weak in what it says about the relations between trade unions and thei members, and fails to high-light the problems that arise when a voluntary organisation can, in effect, sack a man from a whole industry.

Twentieth Century Socialism should be read by all Christians concerned with these issues. Socialist Union is above all concerned to assert that socialism is a matter of ethics - that its essence is not nationalisation or a planned economy or the class war, but first and foremost equality, freedom and fellowship. It is strange how much of this pamphlet echoes the report of the World Council Assembly at Evanston on social questions. In the past "socialism was the direct antithesis to laissez faire capitalism"; "this simple conception ... like a ghost from the past still haunts our thinking. The time has surely come to give what is dead a decent burial". "Although by far the greater part of British industry is still privately owned, we have a very different economic system from that which existed a generation ago." "A socia list economy is not just a planned economy, but a planned market economy," "To eliminate all private capital is to open the road to totalitarianism." " socialist economy is a mixed economy, part private part public, and mixed in all its aspects." "The reason why a socialist economy requires a private sector is because socialists place a value on individual freedom."

Most refreshing is the stress on the ethnical aspect of socialism. "At bottom the conflict between capitalism and socialism has always been a confli of values. Capitalists have accepted material values as the main criterion o progress. What socialists have wanted to see embodied in the economy were th universal human ideals of equality, freedom and fellowship. These ideals all express in their various ways the basic worth of every human personality." " judges an economy by the quality of life it makes possible for every person. And in doing so it takes a man's life as a whole." Equality is not a mere matter of equal incomes, or equal opportunities in certain spheres. It is something that "rests, simply and surely, on men's common humanity." It is concerned with "human fellowship", "a common mode of life", and the abolition of class distinctions and educational discriminations are seen as part of thi move to "fair shares" and "equality of status". It is as much a matter of what happens at work as of how much money one has to spend.

Similarly with freedom, which must be freed from "the partial and distorted views that obscure freedom's real meaning". It means freedom through plenty (and here quality and culture are stressed and not merely more washing machines), but also freedom in work. "To ask for freedom in work may perhaps be the assertion of a better sense of values than any embodied in the statist of production." Fellowship also demands more than state action; "society mu be changed as well. Society is a network of loyalties which bind people to each other". This demands responsibility from people, and much is said about how men can learn responsibility in industry and at their work, which is "a primary means of participation in society at large". Work is a social act, not merely a means to an end. "Today the lust for money is often concealed behind the more attractive demand for higher output."

I have not dealt in detail with the various proposals made, but I hope I have given enough illustrations to show that there are new currents moving in the Labour movement in Britain, towards which Christians should be sympatheti even if their political outlook lies in a different direction. Whether the i stitutional rigidities of the trade unions and the party organisation, the em bittered differences between personalies, and the grave economic problems arising from inflation and the refusal of the trade unions to countenance a wages policy, will prevent these hopeful signs bearing fruit is another question.

III

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIALISM

(Observations of a European Study Group)

1. A Brief Analysis of our Time

Socialism has by no means already "fulfilled its mission". Anxiety and misery are rife in large areas of the world. Entire populations of certain countries have lost their homeland. In prosperous countries large social groups find themselves hardpressed by spiritual problems.

In a number of countries the position of the industrial workers has improved during the past century. The worker is no longer the proletarian who has nothing to lose but his chains. This development means at the same time that the workers are divided into groups living in different circumstances and that the transition to other social groups is no longer sharply defined. A new middle class has emerged and even the top management of industry has lost its old autonomy.

It is only in our century that industrialization which has been steadily progressing has revealed all its opportunities and dangers. This applies to the old forms of industrialization and is particularly in the new ones (automation, atomic energy, the enormous speeding-up of communication and transportation).

The process of industrialization is constantly creating the conditions which allow for an ever increasing population. But at the same time the present tempo of population growth is a social historical fact of the highest significance.

In this historical situation the socialist must recognize that there are real dangers inherent in industrial society as such and that these dangers are not only bound up with particular forms in which industrial society may express itself (capitalism, fascism, or communism).

Our century reveals that organization is the fate of mankind in the era of industrialization. Fewer and fewer human relationships can be left to the spontaneous action of individuals. Organization means not only fitting people into a system of rules of behaviour; it also means subordination to the will of persons with all their human failings. Democracy does indeed place limits on the arbitrary action of these people, but it cannot rule it out. The newly recognised dependence of people in every society which has to organize its social forces on a comprehensive scale means that no future society of that kind will be free from the temptations which beset men who exercise power over others. Even a future industrial society which is free from domination by a class will be menaced by this evil. In no way can automatation guarantee a "society of free men". The Socialist cannot promise a paradise on earth. If he were to transform the whole of society into a single enormous concern in the hands of the State or of a single political party, in order to break class-domination, man would be plunged into slavery and ruin. Even if he introduced these measures with good intentions and based them on good constitutional provisions, the enormous apparatus would develop into "a law unto itself" and would get out of hand.

This situation requires the Socialist to choose methods for reforming society which will counteract the dangers inherent in the industrial system, and not only the dangers which existed in the previous form assumed by that system. He must think more radically than before. The hypothesis that all previous history was a history of class struggles is no longer adequate to sh up the basic dangers and opportunities in our time of the ever-increasing organization of personal relationships.

2. Basic decisions of Socialists

The free minded democratic Socialist values men for their own sake and not as the mere means for achieving any "Purposes of Society" nor as individuals who form "the élite" of certain social groups. The burden of proof rests not upon those who want freedom but upon those who consider certain dependence essential. The Socialists are convinced that, since people are valued for their own sake and are responsible for themselves, they have a moral duty to show fairness and responsibility towards their fellowmen. It is the concern of the Socialist that man should find the way to the highest values in such freedom. But as a movement for the reform of social life, the Socialists include in their ranks people with different views as to the ultimate meaning of life - while respecting the values of freedom and justice. The Socialist movement therefore does not link its demands up with any particular religious confession or with belief in God, although it realises that most of the socialist movements in the world are founded upon certain religious affinities and that many socialists today base their advocacy of Socialism and try to realize a socialistic spirit in their personal life as a result of their religious confession. Therefore nothing lies further from the modern democratic Socialist than that he should regard religion in a deprecating way as "a private affair" or even as a means of deceiving the masses. And the Christians can perceive certain characteristics in the attitude of the non-Christian independent Socialists as secret bases for real fraternal unity on fundamental aims. Because the democratic Socialist today realises that he can indeed establish a social system which is more just, more free and culturally richer, but that he cannot ensure Paradise on earth, his patte of a better society is not a substitute for religion, a substitute which woul have to be rejected by the real religious believer. There is, therefore, no reason why the Christian should regard the Socialist as hostile to the fundamental motives and aims of Christian life.

The new contacts between Christianity and the socialist pattern of socie which we see in many European countries today are lacking, however, in the co plete understanding of religious ties, even when they are limited to confirmi the possibility of harmonising socialist principles with the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. The Christian faith is far more than a mere code of eth The Christian faith believes in the redemption of man as a whole and the reden tion of his world in God's Kingdom; it believes that the ultimate things wil come from God and are therefore beyond the capacity of man to achieve.

The Christian faith however, must take serious account of the whole sphe of social existence, because God wants to redeem this existing world in Jesus Christ. Christianity does not leave politics and economics to their fate, but includes them in man's responsibility before God. The question of the structure of the social order thus becomes relevant for the Christian faith. It has no "Christian" program of its own, but it can only approve social patterns and orders which place people and things in the service of man - thus pointing to the coming Kingdom of God, in which man will live for his neighbour, as God lived and lives for men in Christ. A faith which comforts men in the pressure

of the time before the End with the promises of the End and devalues concrete political and economic responsibility, is really an illusion, "the opiate of the people" as Karl Marx rightly said.

3. Challenges to the present Socialist programs

Within the limits of the historical possibilities, there are two ways in which society may be reformed today; by altering the social institutions (the political way); or by influencing the mentality of people (the pedagogical way). But neither of these methods is certain of success. Even the most carefully-planned institutions fail if people do not act in accordance with their good intentions, and there is always the danger that people who are weak will fall under the influence of bad institutions. The institutions and the dominant attitudes of society are interdependent.

At no time has it been as important as today to follow the pedagogic course. As the progressive and rationalist 19th century was inclined to expect full salvation from a change of institutions, today it is the task of the Socialists to consider the pedagogic method with particular care, especially as certain great dangers which menace the physical and spiritual existence of men under present conditions can no longer be controlled by institutions alone.

However, it would be a complete mistake to give up struggling for better institutions or to rest content with inadequate compromises in this sphere. Tolerating bad institutions means failing in moral duties; and bad institutions may have such a deep influence on men's attitudes that people might lose their own personalities by accepting alien patterns forced upon them from outside.

At a time when human relations have to be organized more and more everything depends on the organizational framework, not imposing unnecessary restrictions on the individual, not becoming fixed and rigid, not becoming so centralized that it gets out of control, and not confining itself to a few stereotyped forms. Under the conditions of present-day life the socialist order of society today must be based on autonomy, self-government, co-responsibility and personal initiative - in short, society must be enriched by differing types of social (and economic) forms and orders.

IV

URBANIZATION, INDUSTRIALIZATION, AND CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

by Prof. Mikio Sumiya

Two views on the modern Japan

It is a widely known and undisputed fact that Japan since the Meiji Restoration (1868) has broken down the old structure of feudalism and modernized herself by rapidly adopting Western civilization. However, in appraising the meaning of Japan's modernization, there is a diversity of opinions, especiall among foreign observers, who may be roughly divided into two groups.

One group appreciates and praises the fact that in spite of rapid urbaniza tion and industrialization through westernization of her economy, Japan still retains her traditional beauty - in nature, art, and human relationships. This group is opposed to the further industrialization and urbanization of Japan, because the skyscrapers of big cities and chimneys of factories will destroy her traditional beauty.

The other group is more impressed by the fact that within the short space of time of little more than a half century Japan managed to build factories and lay out a net-work of railways all over the nation, to establish and operate a modern political organization and educational system, and to enter successfully the family of developed countries. They are astonished at this rapid social change of Japan and are interested to know how she so effectively adopted the economic and social organization of the West.

Today when a number of the economically underdeveloped countries are going through a period of rapid social change during which their traditional pattern of society is breaking down, there seems to be a tendency on the part of foreign observers to unite the two mutually opposing views and thereby to hold up Japan as an example of a country which has successfully modernized herself through industrialization and urbanization without losing her traditional beauty. However, Japanese social scientists and Japanese Christians who have serious social concerns, cannot be content with such a rose-coloured view of modern Japan. Tradition does not necessarily mean "beauty"; and, furthermore, along with the rapid social change that has taken place in Japan various social problems have arisen. What then, are some of the stumbling blocks which have accompanied the urbanization and industrialization of moder Japan.

Process of Urbanization in Japan

There is agreement among the social scientists of Japan that one of the reasons why Japan was able to achieve economic and political modernization earlier than any other Asian country, and without losing her political independence, is the fact that long before the Meiji Restoration there had emerge within the old feudal structure some factors favourable to modernization.

There had come into being some large commercial cities, the money econom had long before penetrated into rural villages, and among the wealthy farmers there had been the tendency toward capitalist production.

In this situation urbanization and industrialization began under the influence of Western countries. While adopting the open-door policy on the one hand, Japan on the other hand had to establish new political and economic

foundations which necessitated her taking over as swiftly as possible Western patterns of social organization. One of the ways in which this was accomplished was to establish a centralized nation-state to replace the feudalistic political structure. This despotic state used its financial revenue chiefly to bring in new technology, to build up new military and administrative organizations, and, in order to carry out these programs, it reformed the educational system. This resulted in rapid urbanization. Seventy or eighty years ago ninety percent of the total population of Japan lived in the rural villages; now more than fifty percent live in the urban centers.

This indicates the administrative success of Japan in industrialization and in the westernization of her social and political structures. There is, however, one unique characteristic of this brilliant achievement which must not be overlooked. This rapid social change did not take place as a natural result of the economic, social, and political development of the people but was imposed upon the nation by the state for the purpose of stabilizing its own position both internally and externally; this led also to the suppression of the economic and social demands of the people. This point may be illustrated as follows:

1. The urbanization of Japan was done at the expense of the rural villages. Even for a long period after the Meiji Restoration the land tax was the chief revenue of the state and was used to finance such programs as the development of modern industry, of a bureaucratic system of administration, a military organization, and an educational system etc., which in turn made rapid urbanization possible. With urbanization, the land tax became increasingly less important. But even so, better than half the farmers of Japan were tenant farmers in subsequent years, and the farm rent which amounted to as much as fifty percent of the total agricultural produce was not re-invested in agriculture; the landlords accumulated it as industrial or commercial capital. Thus it was that the cities grew rapidly and to them many of the fruits of Western civilization were transplanted, while the rural areas remained utterly unchanged, persistently holding on to their age-old social structure and agricultural technique - hence the co-existence of rapid social change and the preservation of old traditions, side by side.

2. Industrialization and urbanization in Japan did not develop from the country through the growth of capital and having roots in the rural village or small local town and in the processing of agricultural produce, but by the financial investments of the Government in favour of the privileged merchants who were linked with the Government. Consequently the way was completely blocked for both farmers and those local merchants who were economically closely related to farmers, to increase their economic power and improve their social position. The rural areas have been left untouched by modernization while the big city had an urbalanced growth. The inevitable consequence is that the rural areas furnished labourers for the city and sold agricultural produce cheaply to the city and in turn had to purchase from the city much more costly merchandise.

3. Once the process of urbanization was set in motion, the rural areas were also seriously affected by it, but Japanese society as a whole, which was being shaped in and by such a radical change, attempted so to control the impact of the new social change upon the age-old tradition as to give a structure to the change lest it should produce too much disruption. Under the new educational system, for example, within forty to fifty

years, the population of Japan became almost 100 percent literate, and this helped to prepare the way for Western civilization in Japan. But at the same time it was exploited as an effective means of systematic indoctrination of the whole population with the traditional paternalistic morality and social relationships. The national constitution promulgated in 1889 as the basis of Japan's modern political system made possible the parliamentary structure, but at the same time it dogmatized the interpretation that the parliamentary structure itself was a gift granted by the Emperor and not based on the inherent right of the people, and it strengthened the position of the Emperor and his inalienable divine rights

Problems brought about by the Rapid Social Change

The tremendous increase in national income resulting from the great increases in productivity due to rapid industrialization and urbanization brought anything but the increase of the common wealth in the true sense. On the contrary it brought a conspicuous unbalance in the distribution of wealth and the collapse of social stability. The progress in productivity differed very much between the city and the rural village. Compared with the city, the rural village remained stagnant, and the farmers, especially tenant farmers, remained as poverty-stricken as under feudalism. Furthermore, the rural population increased so rapidly that every conceivable effort had to be made, not to save manpower and increase efficiency in production, but to keep the surplus population employed and get as much produce out of the limited area of land as humanly possible. The inevitable consequence was the over-working of the manpower and the lowest possible wages for the longest possible work hours. There was of course a slight degree of improvement in the farmer's life but far from enough to enable him to avail himself of the benefits of Western civilization such as electric power, railroads, chemical fertilisers, etc.

Such poverty and insecurity were not confined to the farmer. Whenever the surplus population in the rural areas found any possibility of employment in the city - and even when this possibility was lacking - they migrated into the city. Thus the poverty and poor working conditions prevailing in the rural village could not help having bad effects on the life in the city too. The employer in the city, knowing the low income and long hours of work of people in the rural area, determined their wages and working hours accordingly. With no skill as factory labourers, they constituted an important segment of the population of the urban slums.

The city itself soon became a pool of surplus population. The family of the labourers and small business men in the city, finding it difficult to make a living, looked for employment opportunities, which were hard to find. The small scale trade and industry of Japan were thus built on the foundation of the surplus urban population and their poverty-stricken condition of living. In Japan the number of small trades and industries is extremely high in proportion to other countries and a good portion of the Japanese population are thus supporting themselves. This however does not indicate the healthiness of Japanese economy but rather reflects its poverty and misery. These small industries as sub-contractors depend by and large on the capital of big industries and the wages for labour are less than half of that in the big industries

The second problem is that the "web" structure of rural society, especially the family system, not only remained undestroyed but was positively strengthened in the face of the pressing need to cope with the extreme poverty and insecurity. The surplus population in the rural area when unemployed was supported by this family system in the village and city slums, and, moreover, those who lost their jobs in the city often returned to their native

villages to find the relief provided for them by the family system. Hard up and insecure, whether in the city or in the village, people had to strive to be self-employed within the family as much as possible, for this was just about the only way that subsistence was assured to all the members of the family. This situation made it almost impossible for the old pattern of family structure to disintegrate. This traditional pattern has frequently been praised as the beautiful heritage of Japanese culture, but it is also true that the family structure survived only at the expense of its individual members to whom freedom and independence as persons have been completely denied. One must never forget that this modus vivendi of the society or its communal character has penetrated to the core of both the rural village and the nation at large, constituting the background of the so-called Emperor-worship of Japan and her ultra-nationalism.

This development of industrialization and urbanization in Japan was not only the result of the historical process itself, but was positively fostered by a considered policy of the national government. Varieties of social problems arose along with lop-sided rapid social change, but they were always suppressed without due consideration in the name of poverty and maintenance of the family system. For example, the bad tenancy condition brought about very bad relationships between the landowners and the tenant farmer, and the bad working conditions in industry led to serious labour disputes between the industrialist and the worker. But these problems, instead of being squarely faced, were always explained away by the logic which conceived the employer-employee relationship in terms of a parent-child or guardian-ward relationship, on the basis of which turning against the landlord or the employer in any sense whatsoever was immediately branded as an immoral act, and political and social pressure was not infrequently used to hamper the formation of trade unions, etc.

As for the capitalist class, the representative type of Japanese capitalists did not emerge out of free competition but built themselves up by linking up with those in political power and thereby securing for themselves special rights and privileges. Such being the case, honesty was seldom their virtue, but their primary strength was in their craftiness (tactical genius in trade). Instead of diligence and frugality, they often resorted to bribery and other shady deals (extravagant entertainment of customers or prospective customers being one of them). Consequently, in Japan to earn money came to be regarded as something disgraceful. As capitalism developed, the voice of capitalists carried more and more weight and their social status became more and more respectable, but the capitalist class did not finally become the advocate of economic freedom but rather exploited the feudalistic pattern of social relationships as a powerful means of implementing their economic activities.

It was in this sort of situation that the intelligentsia of Japan received the higher education introduced from the West, acquired their knowledge of Western culture, and upon graduation from colleges occupied the important position as the middle class in the rapidly urbanizing and industrializing society. They constituted a class which was created out of the necessity for industrialization and urbanization. But as they began through their studies to compare their lot with the freedom prevailing in the Western countries and the general cultural atmosphere there, they came to recognize how abnormal the development of Japanese society was and how pregnant it was with many serious problems, and naturally they became extremely critical of the state of affairs then prevailing in Japan. More especially the youth in their tenderness of mind and heart became indignant with the existing social inconsistencies. Herein lies the reason why so many leaders of radical movements

have come from the class of intellectuals, and why even today the Japanese intelligentsia are sympathetic toward such movements. At the same time, this kind of social consciousness could not be long maintained by individuals as individuals, and as they succeeded to respectable positions in the society they accordingly tended to become more and more conservative, so that social equilibrium was maintained unbroken.

A critical attitude toward the existing social order is not by any means restricted to the intelligentsia. The social consciousness of farmers as well as industrial workers is aroused by the depth of their poverty and insecurity. Industrial workers especially are fully aware that there is not much hope for any improvement of their lot due to the abnormal character of industrialization itself, and consequently they tend to become sympathetic toward socialistic or even communistic movements as the last resort for social reform. This in turn makes the conflict between classes so much the more bitter and produces further social insecurity and instability.

Lessons to be learned from history

The most important factor in the rather rapid transformation of traditiona society of Japan is the fact that economic and political powers were both centr lized by the state and were so channelled in the direction of urbanization and industrialization as to help maintain the despotic nation-state. The result was not to increase the welfare of the people as individuals, but rather on the contrary, in many cases, to add the new hardships which accompanied capitalism to the old oppression of feudalism. Although there was a little difference between the city and the rural area, the basic problem thus produced by industrialization and urbanization was the same all over Japan.

Furthermore, under the impact of urbanization the traditional society of Japan - the same problem exists to greater or lesser degrees in all the Asian countries now undergoing rapid social change - has not only suppressed the political and economic freedom of individuals but also has completely disregarded individual personality. Under such circumstances social emancipation means nothing other than disintegration of morality as the social norm, resulting in moral chaos. This moral chaos had then to be brought back into some sort of an order by the ethical principle dictated by the state so that that ultimate source of moral authority was not to be sought in the conscience of the individual but in political power or old traditions. A true emancipation from the traditional society is only possible on the basis of the awakening of the individual as a personality; and when this takes place, urbanization and industrialization will move in an entirely different direction from that followed in Japan.

V

NOTES ON THE PROBLEM OF POPULATION

by Dr. Yuzo Morita

The population problem is intimately linked up with the problem of world peace. One of the basic causes of both World War I and II, was the problem of population. The unbalance between the distribution of resources and population throughout the world continues to be a basic cause of international tension. Even after two world wars the unbalance remains unchanged, and consequently the problem of world political insecurity has not yet been solved. It cannot be solved by political and economic measures which are not based on a religiously motivated humanitarian point of view.

Locus of the Problem

The population problem stems from the discrepancy between resources and population (in a given geographical area), and therefore concretely it is a question of over-population in relation to the available resources in a given area. Usually the following three methods are put forward in dealing with the problem of over-population:

1. Industrialisation in order to assimilate surplus population.

2. Emigration of surplus population.

3. Control of population increase.

The first and the second methods are of a political or economic character, but ultimately must be approached from the humanitarian point of view based on religion. Barriers to international trade, (tariffs, restriction of import and export) must be removed in order to give employment to the surplus population in the so-called underdeveloped countries through technical development, and thereby to elevate their levels of living. Often this cannot be done without the advanced countries making economic sacrifice. Such sacrifice will be made only when a humanitarian attitude prevails.

The same can be said about emigration. Recently there has been a strong tendency for colonial countries to close the door to new immigrants. At the World Conference on Population in Rome 1954, the discussion of the immigration problem was at a very low ebb, because the problem is immediately related to the most intricate international politics. However, the problem of rapidly increasing population in the underdeveloped countries can only be met by emigration to a very small degree. (For example, the annual increase of population of Japan is more than one million, while the emigration up to date has been 20,000 a year at the most. To emigrate more in a year is technically and economically very difficult.) Consequently emigration alone cannot solve the population problem of any given area. Yet it cannot be denied that emigration is one of the fundamental methods in dealing with the problem of population and must be seriously considered from the humanitarian point of view.

The last of the three measures mentioned above - control of population increase or birth-control is a direct and effective measure to alleviate the economic hardship and moral degradation which are inevitable consequences of rapid increase of population in the underdeveloped countries. So far Christianity, and especially Roman Catholicism,has not been cooperative in its

attitude toward this problem, which is an unfortunate result of formal interpretation of Christian doctrines. To plan births out of the sense of responsibility for the economic welfare of one's posterity is nothing but moral action. Christianity, therefore, even from the standpoint of its moral concern alone, should render more positive cooperation toward the movement of planned parenthood. The use of abortion, frequently and openly practiced in underdeveloped countries while in advanced countries practiced "under cover" is most regrettable. To correct such malpractice and lead people in the direction of planned parenthood, Christianity must take up the problem of birth control much more seriously than it has in the past.

The Population Problem of Japan and Christianity

Japan is the area where the population pressure is the strongest in the world. Prof. W.S. Thompson has pointed out that it is the danger point of the world population. For this reason it turned out to be one of the explosive points in the events leading up to the Second World War, but even now a decade after the war the situation has not changed. People in Japan will not repeat the folly of resorting to war as a means to get out of this crucial situation, but its peaceful solution is absolutely impossible without humanitarian understanding and sympathy at the international level for the situation of Japan. More particularly it is sincerely hoped that with sympathy and understanding, encouragement will be given to Japan as she makes every effort to become economically independent and elevate her level of living to that of the advanced countries.

At the Rome Conference the issue of abortion in Japan was raised. (After the war changes in the Eugenic Protection Law made artificial termination of conception easier, which resulted in marked increase of abortions, which in turn is one of the big factors in the gradual decrease of birth-rate in recent years.) Scholars from Japan quite frankly reported the situation as it was. It is fortunate that in Japan very strict restriction has been imposed upon the practice of abortion and thorough-going surveys have been constantly conducted, so that there are available reliable statistical data on abortion, far more than in many other countries. In Western nations while there are cases of abortion, care is taken not to publicize them and consequently statistical materials on the subject are scarcely available and the actual situation cannot be fully known - at least so it seems to us. The enormously high rate of abortions in Japan today is due to: a) post-war relaxation of the law which in years past used to prohibit it so strictly that it was almost impossible to practice, and b) to social confusion and economic hardship of the post-war period. Therefore it must be seen as a phenomenon in a transitional period in reaction to an abnormal social situation. Both the Government and the enlightened leadership in Japanese society are making all-out efforts to lead people away from the post-conception treatment (abortion) toward the pre-conception treatment (conception-control), and are proving successful in this effort. It is sincerely hoped that Christian Churches both in Japan and throughout the world will cooperate with us in this effort with more positive understanding than in the past.

The World Conference on Population, Rome, 1954 and Christianity

a) As was mentioned above the discussion on immigration was at a very low level at Rome. I think, however, this is indeed the most important issue to be seriously taken up by world Christianity if it is to deal with the problem of population at all.

b) At the time of the Rome Conference it is true that the effect of technical progress as the key to the population problem was not fully evaluated. Subsequently, however, the situation throughout the world has been rapidly changing and scholars are feeling increasingly more hopeful today. It is hoped that the Church will also give its support to the furthering of research in this respect.

c) The fact that the birth-rate in Japan has been rapidly going down in recent years (even if it is being realized, to a certain extent, by somewhat undesirable methods) has given hope to the enlightened leaders of the world who have been extremely anxious as to the future population. Even underdeveloped countries can control their population increase by the development of their economy and culture.

On the subject of birth-control, the prevailing attitude of most religions, (including Buddhism and Christianity) tends to be much too formalistic. Birth-control, or more precisely the conception-control, as advocated and practiced today is basically different from what it used to be in years past, and far from being a crime, it is a moral obligation. There ought to be a new interpretation of Christian doctrines in response to the pressing need of the new age.

VI

NEGRO AND WHITE IN THE DEEP SOUTH IN AMERICA

by Thomas R. Thrasher

A French observer, in a book which gained wide circulation in the 1920's, had something like this to say: "The Negro problem in America is of a nature so profound and disturbing that no one in America dares to look into its depths In the almost thirty years since then the problem has become more widely dispersed, but no less profound and no less disturbing, than it was then.

As a native of Mississippi, a priest of the Episcopal Church, a southerner but not, I pray God, an uncritical follower of all that professes to be southern tradition or southern way of life, I have had a life-long concern for the Negro in his search for social justice, and for equality of opportunity. When I was six or seven years old a lynching took place in our town. I don't believe I was greatly aware of the Negro involved, but I did see what it did to the white community. The thin veneer of civilisation was for the moment wiped away, and we lapsed into a frightening and debasing savagery. Today after forty years a remembrance of that day and those events fills me with shame, remorse, anxiety, dread, fear.

I cannot therefore make any pretense to objectivity. My reaction to the problem is deeply emotional, but I do not think it to be an emotion that defies analysis. Therefore it is my purpose in the pages which follow to analyze and define that emotion to the best of my ability and to express as best I may the direction in which a solution may be found. This is a personal witness and does not pretend to be a broad and sweeping prescription to set all men right.

The Lost Cause

It has been almost a hundred years since the defeat of the South in the American Civil War, the fall of Richmond and General Sherman's march to the sea, and yet, because I have heard old people describe them in terms of personal bitterness, they are more real to me than many experiences I myself have had. The injustice and the social chaos of reconstruction, the vengeful but abortive attempt to overturn our political institutions, the attempt to place government in the hands of irresponsible Negroes and carpet-baggers, all these are memories transmitted by word of mouth which have affected my way of thinking. The love of the land, the devotion to my own people, a sense of the gallantry with which our people defended their homes and institutions from a hostile intrude, the legendary exploits of southern heroes have been bread and meat to us, and bone and flesh and sinew. We have not lived on hate, but our love for our country has been first a love for the South and only secondary has it been a love for America. When Toscanini played "Dixie" in Atlanta he received an ovation such as he would have never had by playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" anywhere in the world. I am neither defending nor attacking this state of mind. I am simply stating a fact, a fact with which "outsiders" must come in contact. It is this state of mind rather than the theoretical principles of the Democratic party that has most to do with the persistence of the Solid South.

Since the enunciation of the "Separate but equal" doctrine in the Supreme Court case of "Plessy versus Ferguson" in 1898 two separate civilisations have been gradually evolving in the south. Booker T. Washington, a leading Negro

of the time plainly adopted the principle here set forth, not perhaps as a statement of final truth, but as a means of survival. And the incomparable progress of the Negro under these conditions is a tribute to his wisdom and statesmanship. However, though it worked as a temporary expedient, it could not stand up as a permanent solution of the problem. The dominant group accepted the principle of "separate" in all good faith, but paid little more than lip service to "equal". It was a satisfaction to those who "liked the Negro in his place". But the talented Negro was less and less contented with that place. It led the white man to speak with respect of "the good Nigger", and the Negro to speak of the same person with scorn, as an "Uncle Tom". Within its framework there were many instances of friendship, goodwill, mutual understanding, and real devotion, but it was a framework that doomed him to an inferior place in society. To this day in the deep south there are white men of goodwill who cannot use Mr. or Mrs. in addressing a Negro. They can call them "Reverend", they can call them "Doctor" if they have earned the degree, they can even call them"Professor", but "Mr." never in the world. It is not a matter with them of willingness or unwillingness, it is a matter of simple inability. Their lips simply will not frame the forbidden word. We have thus the unfortunate situation of being unable to speak to our peers across racial lines. So the southern white man who claims to understand the Negro may be quite sincere, and within the limitations of his experience may understand the Negro who works for him, or who borrows from him or who trades with him. But he has rarely if ever conversed with his opposite number in the Negro community. This is the general situation. There are exceptions in inter-racial groups such as the Southern Regional Council and its affiliates, but even here the atmosphere is somewhat self-conscious and not conducive to the free and easy interchange of ideas that might promote understanding. Organisations are concerned with resolutions and programs more than with conversation, and I believe that in this area conversation would bear better fruit.

Within this framework there is a magnanimity, almost a grandioseness upon which the Negro in need can always depend, if he is tactful, polite, humourous, and adaptable to the pattern of behaviour the white man deems characteristic of him. Many Negroes are casual in their sexual behaviour. Many Negroes are irresponsible in meeting financial obligations. One employee of mine years ago owed weekly instalments on purchases greatly in excess of his weekly income. I asked him how he managed and he replied, "they don't all catch me every week". Many Negroes drink and gamble and get involved in cutting scrapes, the favourite weapon being "switch-blade knives". These characteristics may be due to causes sociological rather than racial, but the typical white reaction is to say: "That's the way Negroes are". Because he feels this to be so, and because after all "Negroes are just like children", when a Negro "gets into trouble", he will do things to help him out that he would not think of doing for a white man in the same predicament. Since the lowest wages are paid to cooks and maids and yardmen, the lowest class Negroes are attracted into these jobs, therefore white people know personally only the low class Negro. It is all but inevitable, then for us to generalize from our meager experience, and to think of the race as a whole as being like those we have known.

The Southern white community then has found no fault with the status quo, and though there have been times when, disturbed by some statement by Walter White, or the NAACP, (National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) fears began to rise in their breasts, all they needed for reassurance was to talk it over with the cook, who always allayed such fears by saying that Negroes liked segregation just as much as white people.

When the Supreme Court finally gave its long delayed decision, declaring in effect that "separate is unequal", there was very little excitement in Montgomery. A new white school was opened adjacent to a Negro neighbourhood, and Negro children presented themselves for enrolment. Though they were denied admittance this caused little excitement. The local paper printed front-page pictures of the children, and the white community allowed "how cute they looked in their starched white dresses". The Citizen's Council had a meeting to which they invited everybody who was "mad at the NAACP". But very few people showed up.

This was not to say that there was no concern, but such concern as there was, was a silent concern and anxiety as to how we could maintain our accustomed ways and still obey the law of the land. The Supreme Court itself had said "as soon as practicable", and this did not sound like general and immediate race mixing in the schools regardless of consequences. Are not these things decided largely on the school district in which a child lives? We have contended for years that in Northern Schools Negroes present no problem because they are so few: would a sprinkling of Negroes in our white schools be any more of a problem? There seemed far less resistance to the idea for the graduate schools in our state Universities, and with that as a first step the idea of integrated school systems might filter gradually to the lower levels.

The Bus Boycott

I do not believe it necessary to add anything to thousands of words already written concerning the circumstances which led to the boycott of the buses, nor to indulge in further recrimination concerning the handling of it. The matter is now in the courts and will be decided by them. I refer to it here because it revealed surprising things to the white community, things which even yet many of them find it hard to believe. It came as a bitter shock to many that the majority of our local Negroes were discontented with our time-hallowed inter-racial customs. "We have always had such good race relations in Montgomery", they say. The Negroes are now telling us, "race relations have been good because of what we have been willing to put up with". Another shock was the intelligence and statesmanship with which the organisation was perfected. It is commonly believed by whites that any inter-racial "trouble" is always the work of "radicals" from outside, but the leadership here has been clergy of local Churches, not Montgomery born, it is true, but Southern born. Many whites believe that these men were planted in Montgomery to foment discord, but evidence of the fact has yet to be discovered. It is commonly believed that the Negro is timid and that at the first sign of determined opposition he will retreat and his organisation will dissolve. But again over many long months the Negro in Montgomery has stood firm in his non-violent opposition to what he considers to be unjust to his race.

When a way of life which one has inherited, and which one has perhaps never questioned, is thus threatened at what appears to be its very foundation, there is small wonder that panic and desperation seize upon him. The Citizen's Council movement seems to be an expression of that spirit. It is dedicated to racial purity, to maintenance of the integrity of the white race. Its general assumption is that any lowering of the traditional barriers of separation between the races will lead to what it calls "mongrelisation". It is unfortunate for the cause of racial emancipation that the word "integration" was used: though it applied to the schools, and in that connection is unambiguous, in the connections now used it has become, among vast numbers

of white southerners, a synonym for "amalgamation". The literature produced by the group is designed to inflame racial prejudice and to fan the flames of racial hatred, and it does so by ringing the changes on the traditional question: "Do you want your daughter to marry a Negro?" So the endless argument goes on, the Negro insisting that what he wants is justice, fair-play, first class citizenship, equality of opportunity, the white answering, "this isn't what he wants at all. He wants to marry your daughters." Communication does not exist because the Negro demand is countered by a refutation of a demand not made. If it were not so tragic one might laugh at the whole situation.

The Christian Attitude

The Church has not always been aware that there is a Christian point of view in race relations. Even the missionary who often gave his life to take the Gospel clear across the world tended to be condescending in his attitude to the "natives" to whom he preached. Slavery was not seen as a violation of Christian principles for over 1800 years. The "white man's burden" was in all sincerity looked upon as his duty to lead the heathen out of darkness and into light, even when it was profitable for him to do so. The events of the twentieth century have made us realize for the first time in history that superficial dissimilarity is not necessarily a sign of superiority on the one hand and inferiority on the other, and that superiority of arms, organisation, and industrialisation, does not confer on the superior the privilege of exploiting the inferior. We are beginning to see, taught by "subject peoples", that the implications of the parable of the Good Samaritan are not complimentary to the privileged, and that the last shall be first in a racial as well as a moral and religious sense. By reducing racism to an absurdity Hitler taught us to see the ridiculousness of our own pretensions, and by reducing the size of the world human ingenuity has made us recognize that as neighbours we have got to learn to be neighbourly.

So the Church has discovered that One is our Father and all we are brethren, that there shall be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus. Her missionaries now go out, not to put trousers on the Patagonians, but to help the Patagonians to respect themselves and their culture, and to apply the Gospel of Christ to their peculiar needs. In a world where all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God, our categories of "superior and inferior" fade into insignificance. "We have the same starry heavens above us", as someone has said, "and the same dogs of passion at our heels, and therefore ought to love one another".

William Temple was fond of saying, "the proper attitude toward an occurence is not to ask whether it is good or bad, but rather to seek how good may be won out of it". This statement is particularly applicable to our present situation in the south. The desegregation rider on a bill for Federal aid to education is a case in point. Desegregation in education gained a victory at the expense of education. What kind of victory is it to have the right to attend schools if the schools are not worth attending? In the present mood of Southern legislatures insistence on immediate desegregation might lead to the abolishing of our system of public education. It is every man's duty to hold to his ideals, but it is likewise his duty to come to terms with the reality with which he is confronted. I personally believe many of my Southern white contemporaries to be wrong in their determination to defy the Supreme Court. But wrong or right, that is the way they feel, and at the moment political power is in their hands. I am equally strongly convinced that immediate and total integration of schools would be a calamity for Negroes

as well as whites. Without apology I am a gradualist, a moderate, a believer in social change, but not in social catastrophe. A way must be found to give the Negro a hearing as well as a voice, and to enable men and women of good-will a chance to work out this problem to the benefit of all. I know of a conference on race relations that was held in Alabama to which no Negroes were invited. This is a sort of symbol of our problem. A solution will be found if we can learn to talk over face to face the problems which face us all. The word reasonable has two meanings: first it means in accordance wit reason, and second it means in accordance with moderation. As far as next steps are concerned, they must come together in the proposals we advance for the alleviation of our tensions, and for the development of good race relatio in our land. The Negro is not lily-white, nor is the white man as black as h is painted, but both stand in need of the forgiveness of God, and of mutual forgiveness, one of the other. It is almost as if our Lord had us in mind when He said, "He that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

The Christian doctrine of man is that he was made in the image of God, that by sin that image has been blurred, and that his redemption has come not by his own effort, but by the Son of God entering into his life, and dying in order that man might live. Any social organisation which perpetuates a sense of self-righteousness on the one hand, or which seeks to perpetuate a permanent sense of inferiority on the other is a sinful social organisation. But a sense of sin cannot be accepted by one group at the hand of another group whom they deem to be equally guilty. God, Himself, does not beat us over the head with our sin, but rather in the Cross enables us to see at once, the depth of our degradation, and the height of His love. It would seem therefore that our hope is to be found not in comparing races, not in comparing sections of the country, but in establishing relationships based on the goodness of God and the universal sinfulness of man. Human equality is not human equivalence, but each individual in God's sight is of infinite value, and of much the same sinfulness. It is imperative that we therefore humble ourselves before God, and learn as neighbours to work out our problems together by His grace.

VII

MEDITATION ON ROMANS 8: 22

"The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together
in pain until now"

These remarks come out of a limited experience, but they may be relevant to what in quite different circumstances and quite different backgrounds people may be feeling in a world of rapid social change, when the foundations of society are shaken, and people are bewildered and uncertain. In the last resort it is with people everywhere that we are concerned, and with which the gospel is concerned, and people are very much the same everywhere.

We carry with us everywhere the scars of our early childhood, and the successes or failures of that small community, the family, where we first learnt to be human. In the instertices of our conscious life, in the day-dreams and wishes which arise spontaneously when we just relax, we rediscover the old patterns of our first years. Again and again in our reactions to new situations, we can observe in ourselves the primitive unplanned fears, hopes and anxieties of our earlier years. We mould them into the conscious plans of our mature years, or do they perhaps mould our conscious plans to their devious drives? We are not very conscious of the new life in Christ, but are more burdened by the dominance of our uncontrollable emotions. The past weighs heavily on us, and there seems no future free from it. And yet we know that "we shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption".

We may come from a more or less settled social background, and yet we do not seem to fit anywhere. We are cut off from some social groups by our inability to accept their simple pleasures, and by barriers of education and the more subtle barriers of language and class habits. But we are not exactly happy in accepting the traditional framework of the groups into which we were born. The old class customs and pattern of life offends our sensibilities; we are too much aware of other groups, and our self-consciousness raises a barrier here too. "In Christ there is neither bond nor free"; but we are more conscious of the awkwardness of our relations than of the unity that might be ours. Again, the past weighs heavily on us, and we do not see a future in which we can escape from it. And yet, we know that "in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us".

We are not very certain what we are doing, or why, or where it is leading. We no longer follow the vocation of our parents; our life is not mapped out for us. There are many opportunities for us. The world sometimes seems to be laid before our feet. But it makes us uncertain, and unsettled. We do not follow one direct path to the end; our lives do not very obviously fit into any pattern. There are some men who seem to be called of God to do one thing for all their lives, and from the beginning they know it, and follow the course to the end. We are not like that. We turn first to this, then to that; we are led into strange paths by apparent coincidences and accidents. Though our opportunities are great, we seem to be at the beck and call of chance. We are frustrated, and do not seem to be achieving any positive ends with our lives. And when we read that "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, then prophets, then teachers", we can only think that we are set in

the church for uncertainty. And yet, "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose".

We live in a world of change, and we desperately want security. We cling to little bits of security, and try to establish a few fragments to "shore against our ruin". But we are only just established in our new routine, when we find it swept away under our feet. We have to start our pilgrimage again. We are aware that perhaps our very desire for security is the product of an unhappy childhood, which lacked the security that children need. Perhaps our very reaching out to God is the result of this childhood search; perhaps God merely symbolises our inner desire to escape from our insecurities. We have to ask these questions; we live in a self-conscious world which cannot escape from the revolution of Freud. Our faith lives on the border of doubt. And yet we know that the great work of God was done once for all by His Son on Calvary: our security lies in the fact that "it is finished", and ratified by the act of resurrection.

We have to act. We join movements and political parties, groups and organisation, to achieve the ends that seem desirable, and likely to help men to become more human. And yet we can give our allegiance wholeheartedly to none of them. We are too much aware of their fallibility and frailty, of the corruptions of power, and the fact that the organisations live on when their purposes are no longer necessary. We know that they serve the needs of particular pressure groups and class interests. We know that our own adherence to them is partly the result of our own background and interests. We are sceptical about our own allegiance to the causes we most care for; for we live after the Marxist revolution, and are aware of the dangers of ideologising our social and psychological drives. And yet we know that the righteousness of the law must be "fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit".

More deeply still, we have no way to make God real to us in our world as it changes. In past ages, the truths of the Christian faith were made concrete to men by the symbols of the Bible, or the picture images that were so real to them. Today we cannot accept these symbols so simply; we are self-conscious about symbols, more aware of their function in human thinking. We cannot easily replace the old symbols by new ones, even if that is a proper task. Nor do even the most simple and universally human symbols necessarily have significance for us. God is our Father, but what does it mean if our experience of a father is inadequate? We are practical atheists - in the great words of St. Paul, "as deceivers and yet true" - not by inclination, but because we were brought up and are living in a world which appears to be self-sufficient without God, in which God is incarnated in no obvious way. And yet, somehow, in this godless world, God takes hold of us and reveals Himself to us, in the midst of the darkness, without images of Himself. Somehow He is there.

We live in a world where the future holds great opportunities for all men; and yet it is about the future that we are most uncertain. In past ages, when men knew that the future was to be as the past had been, they could look to it calmly, and without fear and anxiety. Today, with all this great future before us, we grope rather blindly in the present.

And yet this is the universal human, and Christian, predicament. It is in the day-to-day response that we have to live. We are indeed "saved by hope" but "hope that is seen is not hope". God emptied Himself in Jesus Christ to

become man. Jesus Christ lived in day-to-day patience as events unrolled; it was of necessity that He suffered, but the necessity came from outside. And so it is in the day-to-day living that God comes to us, making Himself concrete to us in the breaking of bread, again and again coming to us to forgive us our sins, listening to our totally inadequate prayers, but "ever more ready to hear than we to ask". And so "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" - all the peoples throughout the world in their totally different circumstances - "and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body". And above all, we know that "the Spirit itself maketh intercessions for us with groanings which cannot be uttered". Here lies our great and only sure foundation.

(A meditation for morning worship by Denys Munby at the annual meeting of the Working Committee on Church and Society, Herrenalb, Germany, Wednesday, July 18, 1956.)

Notes from here and there

The Archbishop of Canterbury comments on the Church and Politics

Once or twice recently I have been taken to task by journalists for interfering in politics because I had something to say about Cyprus or Premium Bonds or the Death Penalty or the like. One newspaper which last year headed an article "the Archbishop must go", this summer had an article headed "the Archbishop has gone too far"! Everything which touches the life of the nation is of concern to the Christian, since it comes under the judgment and love of God. It does not escape that judgment by becoming in the party sense "political". The difficulty is that when an issue has become in that sense "political", people are less ready to hear what the Christian judgment may be, since for that patience and a perceptive mind are required. Of course on such matters it is not to be expected that all Christians must agree. We see through a glass darkly in many things, and where there is agreement as to what is lawful, there may well be difference as to what is expedient. What matters is that we should be seeking a right judgment by the Holy Spirit, whether it be about Cyprus (the task of reconciliation), or the Death Penalty (the dread issue of life and death), or indeed about Premium Bonds where I raised a question which has been a good deal misunderstood but, so far as I have seen, not yet answered.

(From the Canterbury Diocesan Notes, September, 1956)